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L'ALLEGRO,

AND

IL PENSEROSO.

THE AUTHOR

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L'ALLEGRO.

HENCE loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus, and blackeſt midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn
'Mongſt horrid ſhapes, and ſhrieks, and ſights unholy,
Find out ſome uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkneſs ſpreads his jealous wings,
And the night raven ſings;
There under Ebon ſhades, and low-brow'd rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian deſert ever dwell.
But come thou Goddeſs fair and free,
In heav'n yclep'd Euphroſyne,
And by men, heart-eaſing mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth

With two ſiſter graces more
To ivy-crown'd Bacchus bore;
Or whether (as ſome ſages ſing)
The frolick wind that breathes the ſpring,
Zephir with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a maying,
There on beds of violets blue,
And freſh-blown roſes waſht in dew
Fill'd her with thee a daughter fair,
So buckſom, blyth, and debonnair.
Haſte thee nymph, and bring with thee
Jeſt and youthful Jollity,
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathed ſmiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple ſleek;

Sport that wrinkled care derides,
And Laughter holding both his ſides.
Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantaſtick toe,
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, ſweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreproved pleaſures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And ſinging ſtartle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth riſe;
Then to come in ſpite of ſorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,

Through the ſweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twiſted eglantine.
While the cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of darkneſs thin;
And to the ſtack, or the barn-dore,
Stoutly ſtruts his dames before,
Oft liſt'ning how the hounds and horn
Chearly rouſe the ſlumbring morn,
From the ſide of ſome hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing ſhrill.
Sometime walking not unſeen
By hedge row-elms, on hillocks green,
Right againſt the eaſtern gate,
Where the great ſun begins his ſtate,
Rob'd in flames, and amber light,
The clouds in thouſand liveries dight.

While the plow-man near at hand,
Whiſtles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid ſingeth blithe,
And the mower whets his ſithe,
And every ſhepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleaſures,
Whilſt the landskip round it meaſures;
Ruſſet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do ſtray,
Mountains on whoſe barren breaſt
The labouring clouds do often reſt,
Meadows trim with daiſies pide,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide.
Towers and battlements it ſees
Boſom'd high in tufted trees,

Where perhaps ſome beauty lies,
The cynoſure of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney ſmokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrſis met,
Are at their ſavoury dinner ſet
Of herbs, and other country meſſes,
Which the neat-handed Phyllis dreſſes;
And then in haſte her bower ſhe leaves,
With Theſtylis to bind the ſheaves;
Or if the earlier ſeaſon lead
To the tann'd haycock in the mead,
Sometimes with ſecure delight
The up-land hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks ſound

To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequer'd ſhade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a ſunſhine holy-day,
Till the live-long day-light fail,
Then to the ſpicy nut-brown ale,
With ſtories told of many a feat,
How Fairy-Mab the junkets eat;
She was pincht, and pull'd, ſhe ſaid,
And he by friers lanthorn led;
Tells how the drudging Goblin ſwet,
To earn his cream-bowl duly ſet,
When in one night, ere glimps of morn
His ſhadowy flail hath threſh'd the corn
That ten day-labourers could not end,
Then lies him down the lubbar fiend:

And ſtretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy ſtrength;
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the firſt cock his mattin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whiſpering winds ſoon lull'd aſleep.
Towred cities pleaſe us then,
And the buſy humm of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With ſtore of ladies, whoſe bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In ſaffron robe, with taper clear,

And pomp, and feaſt, and revelry,
With mask, and antique pageantry,
Such ſights as youthful poets dream
On ſummer eves by haunted ſtream.
Then to the well-trod ſtage anon,
If Johnſon's learned ſock be on,
Or ſweeteſt Shakeſpear, fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild,
And ever againſt eating cares,
Lap me in ſoft Lydian aires,
Married to immortal verſe
Such as the meeting ſoul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked ſweetneſs long drawn out,
With wanton head, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running;

Untwiſting all the chains that ty
The hidden ſoul of harmony:
That Orpheus' ſelf may heave his head
From golden ſlumber on a bed
Of heapt Elyſian flowers, and hear
Such ſtrains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite ſet free
His half-regain'd Eurydice.
Theſe delights, if thou canſt give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO.

HENCE vain deluding joys,
The brood of folly without father bred,
How little you beſted,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys;
Dwell in ſome idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy ſhapes poſſeſs,
As thick and numberleſs
As the gay motes that people the ſun-beams,
Or likeſt hovering dreams,
The fickle penſioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail thou Goddeſs, ſage and holy,
Hail divineſt Melancholy,
Whoſe ſaintly viſage is too bright
To hit the ſenſe of human ſight;

And therefore to our weaker view,
O'erlaid with black ſtaid wiſdom's hue.
Black, but ſuch as in eſteem,
Prince Memnon's ſiſter might beſeem,
Or that ſtarr'd Ethiope queen that ſtrove
To ſet her beautie's praiſe above
The ſea nymphs, and their powers offended.
Yet thou art higher far deſcended,
Thee bright-hair'd Veſta long of yore
To ſolitary Saturn bore;
His daughter ſhe (in Saturn's reign,
Such mixture was not held a ſtain)
Oft in glimmering bowres, and glades
He met her, and in ſecret ſhades
Of woody Ida's inmoſt grove,
While yet there was no fear of Jove.

Come penſive nun, devout and pure,
Sober, ſtedfaſt, and demure,
All in a robe of darkeſt grain,
Flowing with majeſtick train,
And ſable ſtole of Cypreſs lawn,
Over thy decent ſhoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted ſtate,
With ev'n ſtep, and muſing gate,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt ſoul ſitting in thine eyes:
There held in holy paſſion ſtill,
Forget thyſelf to marble, till
With a ſad leaden downward caſt,
Thou fix them on the earth as faſt;
And join with thee calm peace, and quiet,
Spare faſt, that oft with Gods doth diet,

And hears the Muſes in a ring,
Ay round about Jove's altar ſing.
And add to theſe retired Leiſure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleaſure;
But firſt, and chiefeſt, with thee bring,
Him that yon ſoars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The cherub Contemplation,
And the mute ſilence hiſt along,
'Leſs Philomel will deign a ſong,
In her ſweeteſt, ſaddeſt plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er th 'accuſtom'd oak;
Sweet bird that ſhunn'ſt the noiſe of folly,
Moſt muſical, moſt melancholy!

Thee chauntreſs of the woods among,
I woo to hear thy even ſong;
And miſſing thee, I walk unſeen
On the dry ſmooth-ſhaven green,
To behold the wandring moon,
Riding near her higheſt noon,
Like one that had been led aſtray
Through the heav'n's wide pathleſs way;
And oft as if her head ſhe bow'd,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft on a plat of riſing ground,
I hear the far-off' Curfeu ſound,
Over ſome wide water'd-ſhoar,
Swinging ſlow with ſullen roar;
Or if the air will not permit,
Some ſtill removed place will fit,

Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
Far from all reſort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the belman's drowſy charm,
To bleſs the doors from nightly harm:
Or let my lamp at midnight hour,
Be ſeen in ſome high lonely tow'r,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice great Hermes, or unſphear
The ſpirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds, or what vaſt regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forſook
Her manſion in this fleſhly nook:
And of thoſe Daemons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,

Whoſe power hath a true conſent
With planet, or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous tragedy
In ſcepter'd pall come ſweeping by,
Preſenting Thebes, or Pelops line,
Or the tale of Troy divine.
Or what (though rare)of later age,
Ennobl'd hath the buskin'd ſtage.
But, O ſad virgin, that thy power
Might raiſe Muſaeus from his bower,
Or bid the ſoul of Orpheus ſing
Such notes as warbled to the ſtring,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made hell grant what love did ſeek.
Or call up him that left half-told
The ſtory of Cambuſcan bold,

Of Camball, and of Algarſife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That own'd that virtuous ring and glaſs,
And of the wondrous horſe of braſs,
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if ought elſe, great Bards beſide,
In ſage and ſolemn tunes have ſung,
Of turneys and of trophies hung;
Of foreſts, and inchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear,
Thus Night oft ſee me in thy pale career,
Till civil-ſuited Morn appear,
Not trickt and frounc't as ſhe was wont,
With the Attick boy to hunt,
But chercheſt in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,

Or uſher'd with a ſhower ſtill,
When the guſt hath blown his fill,
Ending on the ruſſling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eves.
And when the ſun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me Goddeſs bring
To arched walks of twilight groves,
And ſhadows brown that Sylvan loves
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude ax with heaved ſtroke,
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
There in cloſe covert by ſome brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's gairiſh eye,
While the bee with honied thie,

That at her flowery work doth ſing,
And the waters murmuring
With ſuch conſort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feather'd ſleep;
And let ſome ſtrange myſterious dream,
Wave at his wings in airy ſtream
Of lively portraiture diſplay'd,
Softly on my eye-lids laid.
And as I awake, ſweet muſick breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by ſome ſpirit to mortals good,
Or th'unſeen genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the ſtudious cloyſters pale,
And love the high embowed roof,
With antick pillar maſſy proof,

And ſtoried windows richly dight,
Caſting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full voiced quire below,
In ſervice high, and anthems clear,
As may with ſweetneſs, through mine ear,
Diſſolve me into extaſies,
And bring all heav'n before mine eyes.
And may at laſt my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and moſſy cell,
Where I may ſit and rightly ſpell
Of ev'ry ſtar that heav'n doth ſhew,
And ev'ry herb that ſips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To ſomething like prophetic ſtrain.

Theſe pleaſures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will chooſe to live.

THE END.